

thirty-three of them given treatment for influenza or pneumonia.

"December 14: Northeast blizzard. A search was made of all the cabins of the village and the conditions found are indescribable. Practically every cabin visited contained one or more dead. They lay everywhere. Many of them had plainly died of freezing. The total number of dead was found to be 157. The dead and dying lay side by side. Ninety natives were given medical treatment; those in serious condition were removed to the schoolhouse. I now had 122 persons under my care.

"December 15: A native with both feet frozen and in need of physical treatment was sent off to Nome. Started perfecting organization, and establishing a hospital in the schoolhouse.

"December 16: Stores on hand insufficient. Brandt and a native with two dog teams dispatched to Teller (round trip 136 miles) for more provisions. Admitted four adults to hospital where I now have 39 patients and 28 convalescent homeless children.

"December 17: As several patients were nearly in condition to be returned home, I started the work of removing bodies and fumigating cabins. Attended all patients.

"December 18: Three women and two men were taken to the hospital and five adults and four children were returned to their homes. All patients show signs of improvement."

The patients continued to improve; so Ashton had the village church made ready for a convalescent hospital to relieve the congestion in the schoolhouse. He found time to operate on a woman who was suffering from an abscessed arm, for the surgeon was ready for anything in the medical or surgical line.

His patients continued to improve and, Brandt and the native returning from Teller with needed supplies, Christmas Day was less bleak than they had expected it to be.

Late in December he found it necessary to send Brandt back to Teller for more supplies, but cheering news fills the log until January 9, 1919, when the following line appears:

"One small baby suffering from tuberculosis is rather low."

Three men are set to work burying the dead, and on the 14th, evidently with much sadness, Ashton noted the death of the tubercular infant. On the same day the amateur doctor received a call to attend a sick native living nine miles north of the Cape; he responded like a true doctor, found the man with the "Flu," prescribed for him and returned to the village.

Then for January 15, there occurs this sentence:

"At 8 p. m., I was taken ill with influenza."

Ashton remained in bed until the 18th when he was up again and looking after his patients. Word reached the village that a native family living nine miles inland was down with the "Flu"; Ashton sent Brandt to investigate and two adults and three children were brought to the emergency hospital. Then the epidemic began its decline; patients recovered or passed

the danger point, and the party prepared for return to Nome.

When on February 13, the hour for the departure arrived, the village was in the grip of a gale, with the thermometer registering 45 below zero. On the 18th, Ashton and his crew tried to break through the storm but were forced back; the same occurred again on the 20th. They made a safe get-away on the morning of the 21st but on the third night ran into another blizzard and took refuge at Cape Douglass shelter. There they spent four days; their food supply became exhausted and during the remainder of the returning journey they subsisted on frozen seal meat discovered in a deserted tent. On March 1, they reached Nome.

Keeper Ross of the Nome Coast Guard station estimates that approximately 800 natives on the sparsely inhabited Seward Peninsula were carried off by the epidemic. He and others express the opinion that but



Peter Bugaras, master-at-arms on the U. S. Steamer Unalga. He took 26 children, whose parents had died as a result of the "Flu," and brought them back to health and strength.

for heroic work—and especially that of Surfman Ashton—the "native population of the peninsula would have passed into history."

Congress authorizes the bestowal of medals on coastguardsmen who do notable things. The highest, which is of gold, can be bestowed only for feats on the "navigable waters" of the country. The awarding of the other, a silver medal, is not so restricted. Ashton was not legally entitled to the first because what he did was on land. The records show that neither medal was awarded him, not because his superiors were lacking in appreciation for what he did—in truth, they are very proud of the score he made for the service and make note of it in their last annual report. No medal was awarded him because he didn't bother to apply for one.

A story of the United States Coast Guard's help in fighting influenza among the natives of Alaska

would be incomplete if did it not contain mention of that rendered by the officers and crew of the Steamer Unalga during a spread of the malady in the Bristol Bay district of Southern Alaska during the spring of 1919. Unfortunately the records on file in Washington do not disclose as much intimate detail as even given in those relating to Ashton's exploits.

It was in late May that the Unalga was summoned to Unalaska to help fight an outbreak of "Flu" there and in adjacent communities.

Upon arrival the officers of the steamer found 340 cases in the single village. There wasn't a home, say the reports, in which some of—in many cases all—the family was not helplessly ill. In many all were dead. The resident physician and all the teachers in the Jesse Lee Home, a philanthropic institution maintained for the natives, were in bed and at the United States Naval Radio station the chief operator alone was on his feet and was having to divide his time between numerous patients and the wireless.

Fortunately the Unalga carried a physician, Dr. F. H. Johnson, who took hold of the situation and handled it with vigor. A quick survey convinced him that the bulk of the population needed more than medical attention; they were unable to provide their simplest needs. He summoned the crew of the Unalga and called for volunteers to go upon land and do whatever needed to be done for the hundreds of unattended ill. Every member of the crew responded, and for several weeks they cooked and served meals, bathed patients, made fires in the primitive huts, and performed generally the services of both housewives and nurses.

In the doctor's report this entry occurs:

"May 30: Found many orphans, children and babes with no one to care for them. In one outlying house the mother and one child were found dead and four living children shivering with cold (snow was still falling). They had had nothing to eat for two days. Opened up a vacant house in Unalaska, thoroughly cleaned same, placed Master-at-Arms Peter Bugaras, with three men to assist, in charge and thus established an orphans' home. Collected all babies and children whose parents had died, placed them in the home where those not properly clothed were outfitted, bathed, fed and put to bed."

On the first day 12 children, ranging in ages from a few months to a dozen years, were turned over to Bugaras' care. Before the situation was gotten under control the master-at-arms—a hairy man of the sea—saw to the mothering of as many as 26 orphans.

"On account of the excellent care given those children," the doctor reports, "all of them survived."

Just how Bugaras went about the job of nursing the Indian babies, it is regretted, is not a matter of record; but from a couple of pictures that were taken and later forwarded to Washington we may infer that he enjoyed the task.

For a Brighter and Happier Country Life

MUCH progress is being made in solving the rural social problems. The social relationships which are being developed in the country are doing much to make farmers satisfied with agriculture and the opportunities which it presents. One of the most encouraging things is the progress made in building real community centers. When a neighborhood organization of this kind is established it tends to promote a discussion of all rural problems, to the great profit of everyone.

There are hundreds of these successful community efforts. Among these is the Dixon Township Community Center of Argonia, Kansas. This is worthy of note as being an attempt to unite the interests and aspirations of the farming community with those of the trading center. The neighborhood building in Argonia is designed to serve for large public gatherings, such as farmers' institutes, union church services, high school entertainments and for township offices. It was built and furnished at a cost of \$6,809.

A center of this kind quite naturally tends to develop a real community spirit and pride. It forms a basis for a real socialization of the surrounding country. It provides a real neighborhood home.

In a community which has enough "pep" to establish a good community center it is likely that the rural church will be successful. There are many examples of good churches in live country neighborhoods. As a rule these are found where the people unite into a community church, and forget the denominational differences. A community should make the greatest effort to get a minister who has ambition and vision to look beyond the work of the present to the big things he can do if his work is directed properly.

More money must be paid in salaries to the ministers who direct the religious life of the country. Good men must be kept in the rural field. Fortunately, there is a wave of salary-raising going on over the country, and many ministers are getting from \$1,000 to \$1,200 a year, with perhaps house rent in addition. The laymen are beginning to see more and more that it takes money for a minister to live the same as with other men.

When a community develops a good church and a real community center it also usually takes up the problem of the rural school. And as a rule a

neighborhood of this kind will work out a solution for the rural school needs that is satisfactory. The main solution of the rural school problem is to put more money, effort and thought into it. The technique already is well worked out by the successful schools, and especially by the consolidated schools.

The progress in the teaching of vocational agriculture has been especially encouraging in Kansas. The movement is spreading rapidly—about as fast as well qualified teachers can be obtained. In speaking of this recently, J. W. Zahnley of the Kansas State Agricultural College said: "The public school system should give just as good a training to the boy who runs the old home farm as it does to his brother who becomes an experiment station expert, or a doctor or

lawyer. That sort of training in vocational agriculture should be given in the local high school, and it should include a study of the best practices and the scientific reasons underlying them, and then actual practice in conducting field projects under the supervision of a well-trained instructor."

And modern equipment and methods, such as rural mail delivery, rural telephones, motor cars and modern country homes are playing their big parts in socialization, in the breaking down of the old barriers. This has been especially true with the motor car. There are many communities in the more prosperous agricultural sections, such as Pawnee County, Kansas, for example, where there are as many motor cars as there are families. When a car is available the family can come in contact with the work other farmers are doing. Their range of knowledge is increased; instead of doing most of the traveling in the local community and along the road to town, they travel all over the county, or perhaps several counties, or on vacation trips much farther. They thus get the mental help which comes from contact with many men and with the work they are doing. Farmers are becoming great motion picture fans; if you will go into almost any country town on a Saturday night you will find the streets lined with cars, and the people attending the shows. And an encouraging thing is that high-class pictures are shown as a rule; Broadway and the crossroads theaters have the same shows, with perhaps the exception that Broadway may see the show a month or so before it gets out on the smaller circuits.

An interesting thing about the social value of the automobile to the farmer is that he has obtained it without cost, as a rule. In most cases the average farmer gets more than enough financial advantage from a car to pay all the costs. The social advantage is thus all clear gain.

The future of rural social life is decidedly bright. There are many students of the problem who believe that it will be possible, with the modern advantages which are offered, to build a more satisfactory and happier type of American life among the open fields than on the city streets. Certainly the present progress is encouraging.

New Exhibits at the Fair



(C) Keystone

THIS is a scene at the famous Leipzig fair. There are so many invalids as a result of the war that there is great competition for the sale of chairs in which to wheel them about. The merits of the various chairs are demonstrated for those in need. It is a demonstration also of one of the awful costs of war.